



Sydney wins for local breeder

Marlo Brown

While it is common for Sydney Royal Easter Show patrons to come away from the show with a smile on their faces after riding the rides, purchasing a show bag, and consuming an obligatory dagwood dog, local stud producer Jeff Sutton left this year's Easter show smiling for a very different reason.

Mr Sutton, who began showing sheep at the Temora Show in 2008, has already taken out six awards at this year's Royal Easter show, with several more expected before the show's conclusion next week.

The local farmer described the wins to date as phenomenal, having entered the Sydney show since 2009, but never having such success as he has in 2014.

"This is the best show in Sydney we have ever had," Mr Sutton said this week.

"The crazy thing is there could be more wins for us, judging on how the sheep have gone so far."

Mr Sutton, who won the top award at the Easter show last year, has so far in 2014 taken home six awards including the J.A. and M.Y. Gilmore Perpetual Trophy for best pair, consisting of the Grand Champion male and female of each sheep breed exhibited in the Meat and Dual Purpose Sheep section.

As well as this, his stud have won Champion Senior Border Leicester Ram, Grand Champion Border Leicester Ram, the Brian Walton Memorial Perpetual Trophy, the G.B Richardson Jubilee Perpetual Trophy, and the award for Most Successful Border Leicester Exhibitor.

The journey to the Easter show, for Mr Sutton's sheep, begins at the Henty Show, he explained, where, after receiving several awards, they

move to the Gundagai Show, followed by the Canberra Royal Show, and finally onto the big one; the Sydney Royal Easter Show.

"This year in Canberra we won the champion ewe, champion ram, and reserve champion ram, so that put us in good stead for the Easter Show."

Though the successes of 2014 were extremely unexpected for the local breeder, who got involved with showing sheep for the enjoyment of competition, and his love of animals.

"One of my initial goals in entering the competitions was to raise the profile of the stud, and to drive up the price of the rams," Mr Sutton explained.

In fulfilling this goal, he now runs sales from his private property, with buyers coming from interstate to get their hands on his sheep, which have been described as some of the best in the country.

"Competing has seen the value of our sheep increase, as well as the quality, because they are doing so well, competing and winning against the best in the country."

Following enormous success at the Easter Show, Mr Sutton will now turn his attention to the NSW Sheep Show in May, before heading to what is possibly the biggest competition of its kind in the nation, the Australian Sheep and Wool Show at Bendigo, in July.

While his shearers joked with him, claiming they were the driving force behind his award-winning sheep, Mr Sutton said it was dedication and commitment to the health and quality of the sheep that saw them coming up consistent winners.

"I've really just got the bug for the whole competition game now," Mr Sutton laughed.